

Southeast PTO Meeting Minutes- March 7, 2016

Attendance- Mel O'Donovan, Mary deVecchis, Janice Wehner, Lena Rossi, Thao Doran, Jennifer Mott, Erin Clark, Sheralyn Sibilia, Jon Sgro, Lindy DeGennaro, Amber Casey, Mariah Popeleski, Lauren Rodriguez, Sarai Camacho

Meeting called to order at 6:33pm by Erin Clark

1. Board of Education Presentation/Budget Discussion- Mr. Jay Rueckl from the Board of Education presented the following information: The Board of Ed adopted a budget which will be presented April 7th to the Town Council. Parents are encouraged to visit the Board of Ed website for budget info and to attend this meeting to show support or email members of the board. There is a proposed **4.35% (correction)** increase this year which is substantial. There are two main reasons- Negotiated salary increases account for about \$500,000 of the increase as well as benefit increases due to medical costs. There are proposed changes in personnel as well. There is a new 5th grade teaching position in the budget and to offset this cost there will be a reduction in one special ed teacher. Proposed additions include a 0.5 librarian and a 0.2 world language teacher at the middle school and a part time maintenance staff position. New changes in professional and curriculum development are starting as well. Energy savings have helped overall costs. \$400,000 was allotted for infrastructure maintenance as part of the town budget. A new boiler for a school and other improvements are part of the capital improvement budget. The town council will either accept or ask the board to reduce their budget. Last year the budget went to referendum and it failed. In 2015 the majority of voters were aged 50+ so parents are encouraged to vote if the budget reaches referendum status. The town meeting will be held in early May to vote on the town and education budget. The new building project will be looked into in the new future with a possible target date of November 2017 for a vote.

2. Upcoming Events and Fundraisers- **Game Night** has been moved to screen free week and the date will be determined soon. **4th Grade Moving on Ceremony-** Louann Cooley has volunteered to lead this event with Sarah Kaufold. **Drive in Movie Night-** Friday April 22nd- Jungle Book- The Mansfield Drive-In will be open just for Southeast. This will take place over April vacation. This is not a fundraiser but we will get a price break on cars and concessions.

Square One Art- Personal catalogues and a free sheet of stickers will be coming home around 3/21- If each student donates a sticker then there can be a school wide art display. Products will be in at the end of April just in time for Mother's Day and Father's Day.

3. Savor the Flavor Event- This event was well attended with good food but unfortunately there was a technological glitch during the performance. Parents commented that having more

information ahead of time about the event would have been helpful. Ms. Sadlon is doing a food lesson with 1st and 2nd graders on March 10th.

The Food Too Good To Waste project is still being offered to families. Mrs. Sangree's class did the challenge and the waste was collected and weighed. Ms. Walton presented at the Savor the Flavor Event and there are flyers by the PTO bulletin board for families interested in the project.

4. Teacher Grant Requests- Mr. Hendricks- Grade 3 field trip to the CT Science Center fieldtrip. Request is for \$350 to offset individual costs . Sheralyn Sibilia made the motion to pass this and Lindy DeGennaro seconded the motion.

Ms. Core- request to purchase noise softening headphones for students, total cost is \$64.67 Amber Casey made motion to pass this and Sheralyn seconded the motion.

Ms. Doyle- March 31st- Family Literacy night- Request for \$400 to pay for a local storyteller Lindy DeGennaro made motion to pass this and Sheralyn Sibilia seconded the motion.

5. Principal's Report- Southeast received a Distinguished award for the Smarter Balanced testing due to a 95% participation rate and subgroup scores. The math and literacy parts of the test are different on the computer so the Chrome books have helped students prepare. Testing has been reduced this year by the state. 3rd and 4th grades will test the first two weeks of May. For staffing changes, Mrs. Proffer' vacancy was filled by the previous 1st grade para educator Kristen Johnson and Ms. Lang-Rodean, a retired teacher, is the new 1st grade para-educator. The district math consultant is retiring this year and this position will be a math/science position to develop science at the elementary level. A movie was filmed at Southeast on the weekend. Eliza Renzulli, a SE alumni is a movie producer in NY and wanted to include SE in the movie. Rupal Jain, another SE alumni did a Scratch night and she will be doing another night for parents. George Dennehy, a nephew of a staff member, is a musician who does not have arms. There was a suggestion for gratitude Friday for Mr. Dennehy to come to SE and give a concert for the kids to show how he plays piano, guitar with his feet. The emphasis will be on overcoming challenges. Principal Rodriguez is looking for support for this and Lindy DeGennaro and Amber Casey have offered to help. There would be a day assembly and a night event for families. There was a discussion to have this either as a SE event or a larger community event, different nights during the same week depending on Mr. Dennehy's availability.

6. Other- Local journalists are doing an article on the building project. If any parents are interested in participating please see or email Erin Clark.

Meting adjourned at 7:43pm by Erin Clark.

Minutes submitted by Jennifer Mott and Sheralyn Sibilia